

**CONFERENCE OF THE EIGHTEEN-NATION COMMITTEE  
ON DISARMAMENT**

THE UNIVERSITY  
OF MICHIGAN

**JUN 27 1969**

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**FINAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE FOUR HUNDRED AND FIRST MEETING**

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,  
on Tuesday, 8 April 1969, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman:

Mr. A. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico)

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## PRESENT AT THE TABLE

Brazil:

Mr. S.A. FRAZAO  
Mr. C.A. de SOUZA e SILVA  
Mr. L.F. PALMEIRA LAMPREIA  
Mr. J. NOGUEIRA FILHO

Bulgaria:

Mr. K. CHRISTOV  
Mr. M. KARASSIMEONOV  
Mr. B. KONSTANTINOV  
Mr. I. PEINIRDJIEV

Burma:

U KYAW MIN

Canada:

Mr. G. IGNATIEFF  
Mr. A.G. CAMPBELL  
Mr. J.R. MORDEN

Czechoslovakia:

Mr. M. KLUSAK  
Mr. V. SAFAR  
Mr. J. STRUCKA

Ethiopia:

Mr. A. ZELLEKE

India:

Mr. M.A. HUSAIN  
Mr. K.P. JAIN

Italy:

Mr. R. CARACCILO  
Mr. F. LUCIOLI OTTIERI  
Mr. R. BORSARELLI  
Mr. U. PESTALOZZA

Mexico:

Mr. A. GARCIA ROBLES  
Mr. M. TELLO

Nigeria:

Mr. C.O. HOLLISET  
Mr. L.A. MALIKI

Poland:

Mr. H. JAROSZEK

Mr. K. ZYBYLSKI

Mr. H. STEPOSZ

Mr. R. WLAZLO

Romania:

Mr. N. ECOBESCO

Mr. V. CONSTANTINESCO

Mr. V. TARZIORU

Mr. C. GEORGESCO

Sweden:

Mr. A. EDELSTAM

Mr. T. WULFF

Union of Soviet Socialist  
Republics:

Mr. A.A. ROSHCHIN

Mr. I.I. TCHEPROV

Mr. N.S. KISHILOV

Mr. V.A. USTINOV

United Arab Republic:

Mr. O. SIRRY

Mr. E.S. EL REEDY

Mr. Y. RIZK

Mr. M. ISMAIL

United Kingdom:

Mr. I.F. PORTER

Mr. R.I.T. CROMARTIE

Mr. M.E. HOWELL

United States of America:

Mr. A.S. FISHER

Mr. C. GLEYSTEN

Mr. W. GIVAN

Mr. T.S. WILKINSON

Special Representative of the  
Secretary-General:

Mr. D. PROTITCH

1. The CHAIRMAN (Mexico) (translation from Spanish): I declare open the 401st plenary meeting of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament. .
2. Mr. FISHER (United States of America): President Nixon, in his letter of instructions to Ambassador Smith, (ENDC/239) mentioned three specific measures on which he hoped there could be progress at this Conference. First, he indicated the interest of the United States in working out an international agreement that would prohibit the emplacement or fixing of nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction on the sea-bed. Second, he set forth the support of the United States for the conclusion of a comprehensive test ban adequately verified, and indicated that efforts should be made towards greater understanding of the verification issue. Third, he stated that the United States would continue to press for an agreement to cut off the production of fissionable material for use in nuclear weapons and for the transfer of such material to peaceful purposes.
3. In his intervention on 25 March of this year Ambassador Smith discussed in some detail the factors that the United States believes are relevant to the first of these measures -- an international agreement that would prohibit the emplacement or fixing of nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction on the sea-bed. (ENDC/PV.397, paras. 26 et seq.).
4. Today I should like to discuss the views of the United States on the other two measures.
5. I think all members of the Committee would agree there is no more important job facing us than that of achieving the cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date. We have all said so many times and we have incorporated statements to that effect in the non-proliferation Treaty (ENDC/226\*), both in the preamble and in article VI. Nevertheless, we have not yet been able to agree on the one agreement that would be thoroughly effective in preventing the growth of the stockpiles of nuclear weapons, that is, an agreement to halt the production for weapons purposes of the fissionable material which is the essential ingredient for a nuclear bomb.
6. Our attempts to reach such an agreement go back quite a while, to a time when the stockpile of nuclear bombs was much smaller than it is now, because there was then much less weapons-grade fissionable material, on both sides, with which to make them. President Eisenhower first proposed a cut-off of the production of fissionable materials for weapons well over a decade ago -- in 1956 (DC/83, annex 1). Subsequently, the

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the United States has strongly advocated the adoption of the "cut-off" on many occasions both in the United Nations General Assembly and in this Committee. In 1964 and 1966 we presented to this Committee four working papers (ENDC/134, 172, 174 and 176) on verification of various aspects of a cut-off agreement. At this session of this Committee, the United States will continue to support such an agreement.

7. The essential elements of a cut-off agreement would be:

First, as of an agreed date nuclear-weapon States would halt all production for use in nuclear weapons of fissionable material -- that is, uranium enriched in U-235 and plutonium.

Second, the production of fissionable material would be permitted to continue for purposes other than use in nuclear weapons, such as power and propulsion reactors and nuclear explosives for peaceful purposes.

Third, in order to provide for compliance with the agreement, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) would be asked to safeguard the nuclear material in each State's peaceful nuclear activities and to verify the continued shutdown of any facilities for production of fissionable material that are closed.

8. This last element -- that is, the provision for International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards -- represents a change in the previous position of the United States. The United States previously proposed what we thought was a reasonable inspection system in order to safeguard against any significant diversion of fissionable material. That system involved substantial elements of adversary inspection, particularly in the search for undisclosed facilities. It is described in a working paper on the inspection of a fissionable material cut-off (ENDC/134) which was presented to this Committee on 25 June 1964. Since that time however, a somewhat different approach to the verification problem in so far as it is applicable to non-nuclear-weapon States has been developed in this Committee and has gained wide acceptance. This approach is contained in article III of the non-proliferation Treaty. It involves reliance on the International Atomic Energy Agency and agreements to be worked out in accordance with the Statute of the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Agency's safeguards system as the means for preventing the diversion of nuclear materials to use in weapons. We propose a similar approach to the verification of a cut-off agreement for the nuclear-weapon States.

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9. In indicating our continued support for a cut-off I should like to make clear that the United States reiterates its offer to add to the cut-off an agreement to transfer to peaceful purposes agreed amounts of fissionable material. In the past the United States has indicated its willingness to transfer 60,000 kilogrammes of U-235 to peaceful purposes provided the Soviet Union transfers 40,000 kilogrammes of the same material. The amounts to be transferred would be the subject of negotiation, of course, and it may well be that some might think that it would be appropriate for the agreement to provide for the transfer of equal quantities by both the United States and the Soviet Union.

10. There are two aspects of the cut-off that seem particularly relevant to recent developments and discussions in the field of disarmament. I intend to give special attention to these matters in my intervention today. They are, first, the value of the cut-off measure as a means of halting the nuclear arms race and, second, the importance of this measure as a prudent and necessary step towards establishing an equitable system of safeguards on all production of fissionable materials.

11. The United States has placed the cut-off high on its agenda for many years because we consider it to be a realistic measure that would place a limit once and for all on the size of nuclear arsenals. It would do so by limiting definitively the amount of fissionable materials available for use in weapons. The economic, political and military benefits that both the nuclear and the non-nuclear nations would derive from the adoption of this measure are obvious. Equally obvious is the important contribution of a cut-off in facilitating progress on other steps to halt the nuclear arms race.

12. We are all familiar with the argument against the value of a cut-off agreement that has been set forth whenever this measure has been discussed in the past. The essence of this argument is that a cut-off would not be worth while because it would not deal with the means that already exist for waging nuclear war. The lack of validity of such an assertion is clear, I believe, if we examine its logical corollary, which is that no steps towards halting the nuclear arms race are worth while if they do not completely eliminate existing nuclear arsenals. That is a thesis which this Committee cannot accept in its work.

13. It is arguments such as this that have been used against a cut-off of the production of fissionable material ever since a cut-off was first proposed in 1956, thirteen years ago. Yet, I submit, no one can deny that the nuclear confrontation

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would be at a much lower level and the world would be a much better place if we had been able to obtain a cut-off when it was first proposed. I do not mention this in order to cry over spilt milk, so to speak. I do so in the hope that thirteen years from now we shall not be in the position, after thirteen more years of a dangerous and costly arms race, of regretting the failure of this effort to increase the security of all of us by obtaining such an agreement.

14. We are familiar as well with the argument that the system for verifying a cut-off, which the United States suggested on previous occasions, was designed, somehow, for the international collection of intelligence on key sectors of State defence. Although this assertion did not accurately describe the reasonable inspection system we had previously suggested, it clearly cannot be applied to the inspection system that we are now discussing -- that is, IAEA safeguards on the nuclear material in peaceful nuclear activities and IAEA verification of facilities for the production of fissionable materials which are shut down.

15. We emphasize this aspect of the cut-off because of our belief that the nuclear-weapon Powers should be prepared to accept, in the context of a cut-off agreement, the same safeguards on their fissionable material production facilities as are appropriate to verify non-proliferation in the non-nuclear-weapon States. We do not propose any other inspection or verification for this agreement, and we submit that the suitability of IAEA safeguards should be apparent to all of us who have called on other States to accept them.

16. During the past three years, while our efforts were directed primarily towards fashioning a broadly acceptable agreement to halt the spread of nuclear weapons, several countries proposed that a non-proliferation treaty be linked to other measures of nuclear disarmament. As members of the Committee know, the United States opposed these proposals. Our reason for doing so -- and I believe the correctness of our assumption has been borne out -- was that insistence on establishing such a link as a pre-condition for a non-proliferation treaty would result in achieving neither the non-proliferation treaty nor other measures.

17. The United States is still of this view. We are urging a cut-off in the production of fissionable material for weapons purposes as a measure to follow the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, pursuant to article VI of that Treaty. We would respectfully urge that no country use the fact that a cut-off

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agreement is now under discussion as a reason for delaying its decision on the non-proliferation Treaty. We would respectfully urge that instead it become a party to the non-proliferation Treaty and by such action be able to add an argument based on article VI of that Treaty to the weight of its other arguments in support of a cut-off.

18. I should now like to turn to the subject of the banning of underground nuclear weapon tests. All of the previous speakers have taken note of this topic, and most speakers, I believe, have described a ban on such tests as one of the most important and pressing of arms control measures. The Swedish delegation has, in addition, submitted a paper entitled "working paper with suggestions as to possible provisions of a treaty banning underground nuclear weapon tests" (ENDC/242). I have read and studied, with care, the statements of the representatives and the working paper submitted by the delegation of Sweden.

19. The position of the United States can be stated quite simply. We support a comprehensive test ban treaty that is adequately verified. But we are convinced that adequate verification requires on-site inspections. Ambassador Smith made the position of the United States on this point quite clear in his statement of 25 March (ENDC/PV.397, paras. 22 et seq.). Moreover, in a series of statements during the past several years, we have set forth this position in detail -- giving both the scientific and the political reasons which support it. I do not believe that scientifically or politically there is any basis for changing this position.

20. The representative of Sweden, in submitting a working paper that does not provide for obligatory on-site inspections, has expressed the view that the problem of what is adequate for verifying a comprehensive test ban is a political problem, not a technical one (ENDC/PV.399, para.12). The view was also expressed that what is required is a political decision, not a technical assessment. One cannot quarrel with the sound observation that any negotiated agreement requires political decision. But the political decision as to what constitutes adequate verification of a comprehensive test ban is one which must be made on the basis of extensive scientific and technical considerations, as well as purely political ones.

21. We in this Committee are all well aware of the findings of the SIPRI report on "Seismic methods for monitoring underground explosions", a summary of which is contained in document ENDC/230. That report is the outcome of a meeting of seismologists last



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summer, sponsored by the Stockholm International Institute for Peace and Conflict Research. The drafters of the report took into account all the latest advances in seismic techniques and theory, including the statistical decision theory advanced by the Swedish delegation and relied upon by the representative of Sweden in support of the approach contained in the recent Swedish working paper. Yet, taking all these considerations into account, the expressed assessment of the seismologists participating in the SIPRI report is that a clear separation between earthquakes and nuclear explosions could not be made by teleseismic means for underground nuclear test explosions up to tens of kilotons of explosive yield. This means that each year many seismic events will occur in the Soviet Union which are not susceptible to a determination -- by seismic means -- whether they are earthquakes or nuclear tests up to tens of kilotons of explosive yield.

22. The United States cannot accept the statement advanced in support of the recent Swedish working paper that there will be less than one ambiguous event, or "false alarm", in the Soviet Union every ten years (ENDC/PV.399, para.19). It is our assessment, consistent we believe with the SIPRI report, that there will be a large number of events each year which cannot be distinguished between earthquakes and underground nuclear explosions. That is why it is not possible to verify a ban on underground nuclear explosions by seismic means alone. Furthermore, nuclear test explosions in the yield range of up to tens of kilotons can have very important and significant military value.

23. These are the reasons for our decision -- a political decision based on scientific considerations -- that adequate verification requires obligatory on-site inspections in addition to seismic detection and identification techniques.

24. Our delegation is aware of the fact that the SIPRI report called for further progress to be made in the field of seismic detection and identification. But it is appropriate to point out that the estimates of potential seismic detection and identification capability which underlie the United States position have been made taking into account the reasonably anticipated improvements in seismic capability.

25. Turning now to the political aspect of the question, I note that the representative of Sweden has said that it is not the purpose of control to provide "judicially conclusive evidence" of a violation, but that rather the aim is that "of deterring a prospective violator from concealed testing by presenting him with a sufficient probability of being exposed." (ENDC/PV.399, para.16). However, in

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dealing with the concept of deterrence we should bear in mind that an inspection procedure will serve as a deterrent only if a potential violator realizes that it provides machinery under which the possibility of damage to its interests from a violation exceeds the possible gains to be obtained from such a violation.

26. It is that test which we shall have to use in analysing the working paper contained in document ENDC/242 in order to determine whether it is an effective political instrument. And in applying that test we cannot assume that there has been no violation and that one has to be concerned only about preventing false alarms from inducing unwarranted political accusations of a treaty violation. We must look at the more pertinent and worrisome question of what would happen under this control machinery if there were to be a violation. That is the point that must be addressed if one is to talk of deterrence.

27. I believe that we must assume that a violator would take sophisticated precautions in an attempt to minimize any risk of disclosure. Here I should like to note that the SIPRI report indicates that the possibility of taking such precautions does exist. But let us say that this clandestine underground nuclear explosion is detected and there is some seismic evidence, some probability, that the event may indeed have been an underground nuclear explosion, and thus a violation. The violator would be presented with the evidence; he would be questioned. The evidence which would form the basis of the questioning would be highly technical material -- understandable only to highly trained seismologists, and in many cases ambiguous even to them.

28. And what if one finds the explanation of the event unsatisfactory? The violator has, according to the Swedish proposal, no further obligation. Those who consider their security endangered may, of course, withdraw from the treaty, but the onus will be on them, not on the violator. That would give the agreement an inherent instability. In fact, any nation that wanted to resume testing openly could just conceivably use such a scheme to force others to abrogate the treaty, rather than do so themselves.

29. Obligatory on-site inspections would, we believe, add a sufficiently binding constraint, so that not only would deterrence be greatly enhanced but a violator, persisting in spite of that, would himself have to denounce the treaty to avoid inspection -- or be found out.

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30. The aim and purpose of an arms control measure, beyond its immediate area of applicability, is to lend additional political stability, through mutual trust, to the international scene. Mutual trust is simply not made up of verbal expressions of good will, however solemnly stated. It is attained by the acceptance of mutual obligations, the performance of which by the respective parties can be observed and judged. That is the way mutual trust will grow.

31. In the instance of the ban on nuclear tests the substantive obligation is a negative one, an obligation not to do something. The performance of that obligation by any one party is a matter of vital national security interest to all other parties. The complications of natural phenomena have made the verification of that obligation -- the observation and judgement as to how it is being performed -- impossible without on-site inspections. It is our firm conviction, therefore, that adequate verification of a treaty banning all nuclear tests must involve obligatory on-site inspections.

The Conference decided to issue the following communiqué:

"The Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament today held its 401st plenary meeting in the Palais des Nations, Geneva, under the chairmanship of H.E. Ambassador Alfonso García Robles, representative of Mexico.

"A statement was made by the representative of the United States of America.

"The next meeting of the Conference will be held on Thursday, 10 April 1969, at 10.30 a.m."

The meeting rose at 11.10 a.m.

